

Message Text

SECRET

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S E C R E T PEKING 2122

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGSS: CH US TW

SUBJ: PRC ASSESSMENT OF SECRETARY'S VISIT

REF: (A) PEKING 1985; (B) PEKING 2088

1. SUMMARY. CHINESE LEADERS ARE CONTINUING THEIR REVERSAL OF VERDICTS ON THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO PEKING WITH SOME VERY TOUGH LANGUAGE IN THEIR TALKS WITH VISITING US DELEGATIONS. THIS PROBABLY REFLECTS ANGER AT THE USG'S UNANTICIPATED PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL FOR AN OFFICIAL PRESENCE ON TAIW,, INCOPRE-HENSION OF THE DYNAMICS AND USES OF AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION AND A DELIBERATE EFFORT TO ESTABLISH A HARD BARGAINING POSITION IN PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE HARSH ASSESSMENT OF SECRETARY VANCE'S VISIT HERE MADE BY NPC VICE CHAIRMAN TAN CHEN-LIN ON SEPTEMBER 15 (REF B) REINFORCES OUR CONVICTION THAT TENG HSIAO-PING'S EARLIER INTERVIEW WITH THE ASSOCIATED PRESS DELEGATION (REF A) WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING OF A DELIBERATE CAMPAIGN. FIRST TENG, THEN VICE FOREIGN MINISTER YU CHAN, AND NOW TAN HAVE
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ATTACKED BOTH THE USG VIEWS AND PROPOSALS BUT FORTH DURING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT AND THE OPTIMISTIC CHARACTERIZATION OF THE TALKS BY USG SPOKESMEN AND SEEMINGLY WELL INFORMED JOURNALISTS.

3. THE NEW LINE IS REMINISCENT IN STYLE OF THE PRC EFFORT DURING THE SUMMER OF 1975 TO HAMMER HOME THE

POINT THAT ARMED LIBERATION OF TAIWAN WAS A GENUINE OPTION AND ONE LIKELY TO BE ADOPTED IN THE LONG RUN. CHANG CHUN-CHIAO'S UNCOMPROMISING SABRE-RATTLING WITH SENATOR SCOTT WAS FOLLOWED BY SIMILAR IF LESS VIVID STATEMENTS BY OTHER CHINESE OFFICIALS. IN WASHINGTON, PRC OFFICERS ARRANGED PRESS BACKGROUNDS FOR SELECTED NEWSMEN TO GET THE WORD OUT.

4. THEN AS NOW CHINESE OBJECTIVES WERE NOT READILY APPARENT. WHILE THEY UNDERSTAND HOW TO GET ATTENTION, THEY DO NOT SEEM TO COMPREHEND OR CARE ABOUT THE IMPACT ON AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION OR THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTIONS. WE SAW THE SAME SYNDROME DURING THE VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES OF THE CPIFA DELEGATION HEADED BY HAO TE-CHING WHEN THE GROUP SEEMED TO COURT ADVERSE PUBLICITY, TO ADVERTISE OUR DIFFERENCES, WHILE EMBARKED ON A POLITICAL FRIENDSHIP MISSION.

5. IN ADDITION TO INCOMPREHENSION OF AMERICAN POLITICAL DYNAMICS, WE WOULD GUESS THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS LAY BEHIND THE RECENT REVERSAL IN THEIR ASSESSMENT OF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT:

IRRITATION AT THE FAILURE OF THE NEW CARTER ADMINISTRATION TO ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE THE ADAMANT PRC SECRET

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PROFESSIONS OF ABSOLUTE CONSISTENCY AND UTTER INFLEXIBILITY ON CONDITIONS FOR NORMALIZATION. THE UNANTICIPATED PRESENTATION OF A TWO-YEAR-OLD PROPOSAL THAT HAD BEEN CATEGORICALLY REJECTED EARLIER COULD HAVE BEEN SEEN AS A SERIOUS AFFRONT.

--THE COMPOUNDING OF THIS AFFRONT BY THE USG PUBLIC CHARACTERIZATION OF THE TALKS AS AN "ADVANCE" ON THE PATH TO NORMALIZATION.

--CORRECTION OF THE PUBLIC RECORD, ESPECIALLY USE OF THE PREGNANT WORD "FLEXIBILITY" AS A DESCRIPTOR OF THE CHINESE ATTITUDE. THE CHINESE SEEM TO FEEL OBLIGED TO CORRECT EACH AND EVERY "INCORRECT" CHARACTERIZATION OF A CHINESE PRINCIPLED STAND.

--KEEPING THE POT BOILING IN THE UNITED STATES.

JAPANESE EMBASSY COLLEAGUES CLAIM THAT TENG HSIAO-PING HINTED BROADLY TO A JAPANESE DIET GROUP THAT HE HAD GONE PUBLIC WITH THE AP DELEGATION PARTLY OUT OF FEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD CHOOSE TO PUT CHINA ON

THE BACK BURNER. BY SPEAKING OUT IN SUCH STRONG TERMS,
THE ARGUMENT GOES, TENG WAS GUARANTEEING THAT ADMINIS-
TRATION ATTENTION -- AND PUBLIC OPINION -- WOULD NOT
BE DIVERTED BY THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY FIGHT; KOREAN
TROOP WITHDRAWAL; THE MIDDLE EAST; OR OTHER ISSUES --

SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS, BY

MAKING CERTAIN THAT THE AMERICAN NEGOTIATORS DO NOT
AGAIN MISREAD CHINESE RESOLVE AND CONSISTENCY.

6. OUR SUGGESTIONS ON HOW THIS SITUATION SHOULD BE
ADDRESSED DURING THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH
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FOREIGNMINISTER HUANG HUA IN NEW YORK FOLLOW.

7. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO PASS THIS MESSAGE TO HONG KONG, TAIPEI AND
TOKYO.
WOODCOCK

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NNN

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